

Socio-Economic Statement

Burgar Hill Wind Farm Repower

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Report Prepared for:

Burgar Hill Energy Ltd.

Author:

Olivia Selby (Green Cat Renewables Ltd.)

Kirsty Stirling (Green Cat Renewables Ltd.)

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

This stand-alone Socio-Economic Statement has been compiled by Green Cat Renewables Ltd and details how Burgar Hill Energy Limited (hereafter referred to as ‘the Applicant’) and the Burgar Hill Wind Farm Repower (hereafter referred to as ‘the Proposed Development’) will support, contribute to and comply with the socio-economic principals of National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Onshore Wind Sector Deal (OWSD).

Scottish Renewables began working on a new report framework in the spring of 2024 as an outgrowth of the Onshore Wind Sector Deal, influenced by BiGGAR Economics work on maximising net socio-economic benefit. The framework aims to create a report where developers can showcase their support for local communities and serve as a mechanism through which developers comply with NPF4 Policy 11c and 25. This socio-economic statement will consider this ongoing discourse within the industry.

This report will be split into two main sections:

- Direct benefits – those controlled directly by the Applicant to comply with industry best practice and maximise net economics benefits; and
- Enabling contributions – those that will be delivered in the future by establishing conditions for success.

1.2 Policy Overview

1.2.1 National Planning Framework 4

The NPF4 was published by the Scottish Government on 13 February 2023 and sets out Scotland’s national and regional priorities through spatial principles. These spatial principles aim to reduce the impacts of climate change by decarbonising industry, reducing community inequalities and creating a more circular economy, all of which will allow Scotland to play their part in achieving the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals. Within this, six national developments support the delivery of sustainable places, one of which is strategic renewable electricity generation and transmission structure which will aim to:

“Support electricity generation and associated grid infrastructure throughout Scotland, providing employment and opportunities for community benefit, helping to reduce emissions and improve security of supply.”

Policy 11 (Energy) of NPF4 encourages and promotes the development of onshore and offshore renewable energy developments. Under 11(c), renewable energy developments will only be supported by the Scottish Government when due consideration is given to maximising net economic benefit:

“Development proposals will only be supported where they maximise net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities”.

Policy 25: (Community Wealth Building) promotes a new strategic approach to economic development. Under part (a) of this policy, development proposals will be supported where they are supporting local economic priorities, such as by improving community reliance, creating local jobs, and increasing spending within communities to ensure the use of local supply chains and services.

1.2.2 Onshore Wind Sector Deal

The OWSD was published by the Scottish Government in September 2023 to set the next set of ambitions for onshore wind delivery in Scotland. One focus of the report is sustainable economic development and how onshore wind can:

“Drive economic growth, create high-quality jobs, reduce carbon emissions and ultimately benefit the communities of Scotland”.

To achieve this, there is a focus on upskilling Scotland’s skilled workforce to become skilled renewable professionals and delivering an increased number of opportunities, such as apprenticeships, for new, young professionals. It is noted that the Scottish Government will:

“Support the enhancement of the current skills and training provision by further and higher education and other training providers to focus on delivering the needs of the wind industry and to position Scotland as a world leader in material circularity”.

1.2.3 Orkney Local Development Plan

The Orkney Local Development Plan 2017¹ (hereinafter referred to as the LDP) sets out a vision and spatial strategy to guide land development in Orkney over the next 10–20 years. It outlines the land-use planning policies that Orkney Islands Council (OIC) will apply when determining planning applications. The LDP also includes development proposals for towns, villages and rural settlements, and defines settlement boundaries within which development will, in principle, be supported. OIC supports the use of renewable and low carbon technologies to heat and power homes, workplaces and community facilities and seeks to facilitate appropriate developments associated with a variety of types of renewable energy generation. The LDP notes the net-economic impacts of a proposal, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated businesses and supply chain opportunities, will be taken into consideration and any demonstrable benefits will be balanced against any identified adverse impacts on known constraints.

1.3 The Applicant

Burgar Hill Energy Limited is a joint venture between the local Spence family who own Burgar Hill Renewables Limited and Thrive Renewables plc, created to repower Burgar Hill Wind Farm (the Existing Scheme) once the current infrastructure comes to the end of its operational life. Both parties each currently operate an existing turbine on the Site and as of December 2025, Burgar Hill Energy has taken ownership of two Nordex N80 turbines which operate part of the Existing Scheme.

1.3.1 Burgar Hill Renewables Limited (BHR)

Burgar Hill Renewables Limited owns most of the land on Burgar Hill and is the operator of a 2.3MW Enercon E70 on Burgar Hill, commissioned in 2009. Burgar Hill Renewables Limited is owned by Orcadians Mervyn and Maureen Spence and their children, who are keen to ensure the project continues to have a positive impact on Orkney.

1.3.2 Thrive Renewables plc

Thrive Renewables plc exists to tackle the climate emergency, working with investors, developers, businesses and communities to fund, build and operate clean energy projects since 1994. The company has operated a 1.3MW Nordex N60 turbine at Burgar Hill for over twenty years. Originally established to widen ownership of clean energy projects, the Bristol-based company unites a community of over 6,500 shareholders, mostly individual small investors.

¹ [Orkney Local Development Plan](#) (April 2017) (Accessed 26/09/2025)

2 Project Context

2.1 Overview

This section of the Socio-Economic statement provides project context for the Proposed Development. It provides:

- A description of the Proposed Development and its selection process as an appropriate Site;
- The baseline socio-economic environment; and
- The capacity of the local community to benefit from the Proposed Development.

2.2 The Proposed Development

2.2.1 The Site

The Application Site ('the Site') is located solely in the OIC area, approximately 1.4km north-west of the village Evie and 1.0km south-west of the A966. The Site currently hosts six operational turbines of varying typologies, with a total generating capacity of approximately 12.5MW ('Existing Scheme'). By replacing five of the six existing wind turbines with larger and more modern machines, the Proposed Development has the potential to more than double generating capacity, thereby enhancing the wind farm's contribution to national net zero targets and simultaneously maximising efficient use of land.

Initial studies were carried out for the Site which evaluated the Site's repowering potential. This involved initial constraints mapping, consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees, environmental baseline surveys and desk-based assessments. This process then allowed suitable areas for development to be identified.

The design process of the Proposed Development has had three key iterations. These iterations have taken into consideration environmental constraints, results from environmental surveys, scoping responses from consultees, knowledge from the operational wind farm and input from turbine manufacturers for the replacement turbines.

The final repowering layout is derived from a thorough review of current data available on the successful operation of the six wind turbines on-site, alongside diligent design and communication with key stakeholders, aimed at mitigating any likely significant effects through design.

By following the adopted design process, the Proposed Development has been sited and designed to avoid significant environmental impacts while maximising generation capacity of the Site, thereby contributing to offsetting carbon emissions and supporting ambitious renewable targets set by the Scottish Government.

The design process is detailed further in **EIAR Chapter 3 – Assessment of Alternatives** and the accompanying **Design and Access Statement**.

2.2.2 The Proposed Development

The Proposed Development will see the replacement of five turbines with five larger turbines of up to 149.9m to tip. The new turbines will be positioned as close to the current turbine locations as possible and where possible, will use existing tracks to facilitate easy access, minimise disruption to the surrounding environment and maintain a sense of familiarity in the wider landscape.

The Proposed Development will comprise:

- Five, three-bladed horizontal axis wind turbines measuring up to 149.9m tip height;
- Crane hardstandings and laydown areas at each turbine location;
- Turbine foundations;

- New and upgraded access tracks, including two turning heads
- Temporary/permanent construction compounds, including parking, and welfare facilities;
- On-site cabling and a new substation building; and
- Associated ancillary works.

Details of the Proposed Development are detailed further in **EIAR Chapter 4 – The Proposed Development**.

2.3 Baseline Socio-Economic Conditions

Baseline socio-economic data will be focussed on the local council area – Orkney – and Scotland. This includes a review of the following information resources:

- Up-to-date discourse surrounding the impacts of wind farms on social and economic trends;
- Population figures;
- Information on the size and performance of the local economy; and
- Deprivation score.

Where applicable, national, and regional information/studies are referenced to provide context on local results.

The following information sources have been utilised for the purposes of this report:

- Information on the Existing Scheme and Proposed Development as provided by the Applicant;
- National Records of Scotland²;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS)³;
- Orkney Islands Council⁴;
- BiGGAR Economics Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014 (2015)⁵;
- BiGGAR Economics (2021) Case Study of Crossdykes Wind Farm⁶;
- ONS (2024) Non-financial Business Economy, UK Regional Results: Sections A to S, Scotland, 2008 to 2020⁷; and
- Scottish Government (2022) Supply, Use and Output Tables⁸.

2.3.1 Population

The National Records of Scotland (NRS) mid-2024 population⁹ estimates stated that Scotland had a population of 5,546,900 as of the 30 June 2024. As of mid-2024, the population of Orkney was 22,020 making it the lowest populated out of 32 council areas in Scotland. Orkney covers a land area of 990 square kilometres making it the 17th largest Council area in Scotland based on land size. Orkney has an average population density of 22 persons per square kilometre (km²).

The population structure for Orkney and Scotland, according to NRS are out in **Table 2.1**.

² NRs (2025). Available at: [National Records of Scotland](#) (Accessed 24/09/2025)

³ ONS (2025). Available at: [Office for National Statistics](#) (Accessed 24/09/2025)

⁴ Orkney Islands Council (2025). Available at: [Home](#) (Accessed 24/09/2025)

⁵ BiGGAR Economics (2015) Onshore Wind: Economic Impacts in 2014

⁶ BiGGAR Economics (2021). Available at: <https://biggareconomics.co.uk/crossdykes-wind-farm-impact-case-study> (Accessed 24/09/2025)

⁷ Non-financial business economy, regional results: Sections A to S

⁸ Scottish Government (2024). Available at: [Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables](#) (24/09/2025)

⁹ National Records of Scotland (2025). Mid-2024 population estimates. Available at: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/publications/mid-2024-population-estimates/> (29/09/2025)

Table 2.1 – Orkney and Scotland Age Demographics (2024)¹⁰

Age Group	Orkney (No.)	Orkney (%)	Scotland (No.)	Scotland (%)
0-15	3,442	16	896,833	16
16-64	13,226	60	3,583,029	65
65+	5,352	24	1,067,038	19
All Ages	22,020	100	5,546,900	100

Table 2.1 shows that 60% of the Orkney population is aged between 16-64. It also highlights that Orkney's 65+ demographic (24%) is larger than the 0-15 demographic (16%) suggesting Orkney has an ageing population. The same general conclusion can also be drawn for the population of Scotland. Orkney's 65+ demographic (24%) is larger than Scotland's 65+ population (19%) which suggest, again, that the Orkney has an ageing population.

2.3.2 Local Business Base

The below figures have been informed by NOMIS Labour Market Profiles¹¹. The information provided by NOMIS is available at a local authority-wide and regional-wide level, showing economic activity, the availability of labour, and employment demand. The working age population will be defined as those people aged between 16-64 years in line with NOMIS percentage calculations. Orkney has a higher percentage of individuals aged over 65 and a lower economically active population when compared to Scotland. Unemployment data is unavailable for Orkney as the data sample is disclosive.

Table 2.2 - Economic Activity for Orkney, Scotland and the Great Britain (GB) (October 2024 – September 2025)

	Orkney	Scotland	Great Britain
Economically Active ¹²	81.2%	76.6%	78.6%

Table 2.3 - Earnings by place of residence (2025)

	Orkney	Scotland	Great Britain
Average Gross Weekly Pay for Full-Time Workers by Place of Residence	£786.00	£775.60	£766.6

Table 2.2 shows that 81.2% of the population are economically active in the Orkney. This is greater than both the Scottish and GB economically active rate of 76.6% and 78.6% respectively. This means a larger share of the working-age population is participating in the labour market and highlights the labour force participation rate is relatively strong, despite an ageing population (**Table 2.1**). The high percentage of economically active individuals may suggest that there is a relatively large labour force available locally which gives greater potential to recruit local workers and raises potential for local economic participation. According to the ONS¹³, the unemployment rate in Orkney was 1.7% in the year ending December 2023 which is relatively low in comparison to other local authorities within Scotland. However, a low unemployment rate does not always indicate no economic challenges, the rural location, combined with a limited availability of suitable accommodation, presents significant challenges for recruitment and effective workforce planning. **Table 2.3** revealed that the average weekly pay for full-time

¹¹ Nomis (2024). Available at: [Labour Market Profile – Orkney Islands](#) (Accessed 23/02/2026)

¹² Economically Active: People who are either in employment or unemployed.

¹³ ONS (2024). Available at: [Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity in Orkney Islands](#) (Accessed 22/04/2025)

workers in Orkney (£786.00) is £10.40 more than the Scottish Average (£775.60) and £19.40 more than the GB average (£766.60). There could be several factors that contribute to the higher average pay. Firstly, the local economy may be dominated by industries that typically offer higher wages, or the local workforce might also have, on average, higher qualifications or more specialised skillsets which could boost employment in higher-paying roles and industries.

Table 2.4 provides a breakdown of employment and employment sections across Orkney, Scotland and Great Britain.

Table 2.4 - Percentage of people employed by sector in Orkney, Scotland and Great Britain (Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey : open access)

Area of Employment	Orkney (%)	Scotland (%)	Great Britain (%)
A : Agriculture, forestry and fishing	10.4	1.7	0.6
B : Mining and quarrying	0.6	1.0	0.1
C : Manufacturing	4.2	7.0	7.2
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.4	0.8	0.4
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.4	0.7	0.7
F : Construction	5.8	5.8	5.0
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10.4	12.5	13.6
H : Transportation and storage	8.3	4.2	4.9
I : Accommodation and food service activities	6.7	8.2	7.8
J : Information and communication	1.7	2.7	4.5
K : Financial and insurance activities	0.4	3.4	3.4
L : Real estate activities	0.6	1.6	1.9
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	4.2	7.1	9.2
N : Administrative and support service activities	1.9	6.5	8.5
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	8.3	6.7	4.9
P : Education	7.5	8.5	8.6
Q : Human health and social work activities	16.7	16.5	14.1
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	5.8	3.1	2.5
S : Other service activities	1.7	1.8	1.9

Table 2.4 reveals that OIC supports a broad range of economic activity. It also shows that some of the numbers employed in each sector are broadly in line with the regional and national average, whereas others, such as 'Transportation and Storage' represent a higher rate of employment at 8.3%, when compared to 4.3% across Scotland and 4.9% across the GB. The largest employment sectors in Orkney are 'Human Health and Social Work' (16.7%), 'Wholesale and retail trade' (10.4%), 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' (10.4%) and 'Transportation and Storage' (8.3%). The high percentage of those employed in 'Human Health and Social Work' is higher than both

the Scottish and GB average which reflects the demands of the ageing population within the OIC area. It should be noted that tourism plays a significant role within the Orkney economy, with its benefits distributed across multiple sectors, including accommodation and food services, transportation and storage, and manufacturing. For more information, please see **EIAR Chapter 13 – Tourism and Recreation**.

Of importance to this assessment are the numbers of people employed in sectors that could potentially benefit from the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. **Table 2.4** shows that 5.8% of Orkney's workforce are employed in 'Construction' which is in line with the Scottish average and higher than the GB average. This suggests that there may be more skilled workers available which could fulfil employment-based opportunities throughout the construction phase of the Proposed Development within the Orkney. The other sector which may benefit from the Proposed Development is 'Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning', which employs 0.4% of Orkney Island's workforce which is lower than the Scottish average. This suggests there may be fewer local-based employment opportunities from the Proposed Development due a shortage of skills in those sectors.

2.3.3 Deprivation

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)¹⁴ is a composite measure of deprivation based on seven indicators: employment, income, health, education, access to services, crime and housing. The local area geography adopted by the Scottish Government for this measure is data zones. The SIMD ranks small areas (called data zones) from most deprived (ranked 1) to least deprived (ranked 6,976). These areas can be ranked based on which decile (tenth of the distribution) they belong to, for example decile 1 contains the most deprived 10%, and decile 10 contains the least deprived 10%. Of the 6,976 data zones, 29 are located within the OIC area, representing under 0.5%. The Proposed Development lies within data zone S01011812 (West Mainland) and has an overall decile of 7. **Table 2.5** show the average SIMD ratings for OIC.

Table 2.5 - SIMD Breakdown

SIMD Indicator		
	Rank 2020	Decile
Income domain	4,384	7
Employment domain	4,339	7
Health domain	4,611	7
Education, skills and training domain	3,889	6
Geographic access domain	2,171	4
Crime domain	4,946	8
Housing domain	3,817	6
Overall SIMD	4,052	6

Generally, Orkney performs just above average across the range of indicators, to give an average decile of 6. This places Orkney in the least deprived 40% of the population. Across most indicators, Orkney maintains a steady 7 or above, except for 'Geographic Access Domain' with a decile of 4. The Proposed Development could aid the council in improving deprivation, particularly in relation to 'employment' and 'education, skill and training' with the potential of providing job opportunities throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases, as

¹⁴ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2020). Available at: <https://simd.scot/#/simd2020/BTTTTT/10/-3.0947/58.9905/> (Accessed 29/09/2025)

well as education and training-based opportunities. The Applicant's commitment to this is discussed further in **Section 4**.

2.3.4 Fuel Poverty

The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019¹⁵ states that a household is in fuel poverty if:

- a. more than 10% (20% for extreme fuel poverty) of net income is required to pay for their reasonable fuel needs after housing costs have been deducted.
- b. the remaining household income is not enough to maintain an acceptable standard of living, defined as at least 90% of the UK Minimum Income Standard (MIS) once childcare costs and disability or care benefits are deducted.

The main drivers of fuel poverty are poor home energy efficiency, high energy costs, low household income and how energy is used in the home. Rural communities tend to have higher rates of fuel poverty due to a number of factors relating to housing, energy access and income. In particular, rural and island communities tend to spend more on electricity as they are not connected to mains gas network. In addition, rural and island communities have the highest proportion of least energy efficient residential properties¹⁶. According to the Scottish Islands Data Overview (2025), 31% of households within OIC experience fuel poverty which is higher than the average rate within Scotland of 24%.

Fuel Poverty in Orkney is recognised as a serious issue and in 2017, OIC published Orkney's Fuel Poverty Strategy 2017 – 2022. The report was developed to build on existing initiatives and address any gaps in current provision. It also supports the Local Housing Strategy and aligns with the Orkney Energy Strategy, which has been developed alongside it. This strategy is no longer current, but its objectives are now being carried forward through updated local housing strategies and national policy frameworks such as the OIC Local Housing Strategy (2024 – 2029) and the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019.

¹⁵ Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019. Accessed 19/03/2026

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2025). Scottish Islands Data Overview (2025). Accessed 19/03/2026

3 Direct Benefits

3.1 Overview

This section of the report will discuss the likely net socio-economic benefits the Proposed Development will contribute to the local and national economy, in order to comply with Policy 11(c) of NPF4. It also provides an overview of the estimated contributions that the five turbines within the Landownership Boundary have contributed to date.

3.2 Study Area

Socio-economics will be discussed at a local and regional level, in this case Orkney and Scotland. International and wider UK based socio-economic effects have not been included as:

- Impacts beyond Scotland (rest of the UK and international) are not considered to be a material planning consideration for a project of this scale; and
- A project of this scale is unlikely to provide meaningful impacts beyond the local (Orkney) and national (Scottish) level.

3.3 Assessment Methodology

This assessment has considered the economic and employment impacts of the Proposed Development within the Socio-Economic Study Areas, as outlined above. The socio-economic assessment has been based on a quantitative, desk-based assessment to determine the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on the local economy.

Project spend data for each phase of the Proposed Development – development, construction (repowering) and operation – has been provided by the Applicant to allow socio-economic impacts to be anticipated. This data, combined with information from the Office for National Statistics^{17,18}, has been used to quantify the anticipated jobs years and Gross Value Added (GVA) the Proposed Development will provide. Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of the economic value that a business, industry, or region contributes to the economy. In this case, how much economic value the Proposed Development adds to the economy.

Impacts will be expressed as:

- Direct impacts: employment opportunities during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. The nature and scale of the economic impact will be determined by the total cost of the Proposed Development, where materials are sourced from and the cost of labour.
- Indirect impacts: employment opportunities created down the supply chain by companies providing services to the Proposed Development during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases; and
- Induced impacts: measured by the employment created by the additional spend of wages into the local economy and through the purchasing of basic materials, equipment and office space for staff.

¹⁷ Office for National Statistics (2024) Business Register and Employment Survey. Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/newbres6pub> (Accessed 30/01/2026)

¹⁸ Office for National Statistics (2025) Non-financial business economy, regional results. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/datasets/uknonfinancialbusinesseconomyannualbusinesssurveyregionalresultssectionsas> (Accessed 30/01/2025)

Direct impacts will be estimated using data supplied directly from the Applicant as well as the Office for National Statistics¹⁹. These values have been broken down by the industry the spend would accrue into (using standard industrial classification (SIC) codes). Once expenditure is split into relevant industrial sectors, direct GVA was estimated by applying the relevant turnover per GVA²⁰. Employment as a result of the Proposed Development has been estimated by dividing industry specific project expenditure by average industry turnover per employee²¹. This provides an estimate of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) job-years associated with the level of economic activity generated.

Induced and indirect impacts will be calculated using Type I and Type II multipliers from the Supply, Use, and Output Tables multipliers on the Scottish Government.

Standard leakage and displacement factors will also be taken into account for any employment and GVA impacts. Leakage refers to the portion of economic benefits – such as spending, income, or jobs – generated by a project that flows out of the anticipated economy (i.e. OIC / Scotland) to other regions / countries. It is important to note, Orkney is likely to see a greater share of contract-related benefits than other local authority areas, as its geographic location reduces the extent to which spending leaks into neighbouring regions. Displacement refers to the economic activity or jobs generated by a new project that simply replaces or pushes out other activity, rather than adding something new to the economy. It is anticipated that deadweight (a loss of total economic efficiency due to taxes, subsidies or price controls) and substitution (change in consumption patterns) does not need to be considered for the Proposed Development as this is a new project.

3.3.1 Study Limitations

Where possible, the most up-to-date information has been used when collecting baseline data for different parts of the socio-economic assessment; however, the most up-to-date data from different parts of the ONS website varies (e.g. SIC classifications were last updated in 2025 but business economy results were last updated in 2024). In Green Cat Renewable's (GCR) professional judgement, this assessment still reflects the most likely economic and employment outcomes for the Proposed Development.

As noted, socio-economic impacts have been calculated using project data and publicly available data from reliable sources (e.g. Office for National Statistics and Scottish Government). Whilst socio-economic assumptions have been made, they cannot be fully predicted for the Proposed Development at this stage of the development.

3.4 Burgar Hill's Contributions to Date (Existing Scheme)

The Existing Scheme has made notable contributions to date at both a local (Orkney) and national (Scotland) level. Based on statutory accounts the approximate initial construction spend of the existing Burgar Hill Scheme was in the range of £13 million, some of which would have been Orkney and some Scotland. A further estimated £13 million has been spent on operational maintenance alone during the operational phase of the Existing Scheme, some of which will have been spent in Orkney, and some in Scotland. The total estimated spend for the Existing Scheme is unable to be quantified due to multiple developer involvement and limitations on publicly available information.

Nonetheless, the Existing Scheme has made notable contributions to both the local and national economy during the original construction and operational phases. This direct spend would have created economic benefits,

¹⁹ ONS (2022). Available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/datasets/uknonfinancialbusinesseconomyannualbusinesssurveyregionalresultssectionsas> (Accessed 03/06/2025)

²⁰ Office for National Statistics (2025). Available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/datasets/uknonfinancialbusinesseconomyannualbusinesssurveyregionalresultssectionsas> (Accessed 06/03/2026)

²¹ NOMIS (2024). Business Register and Employment Survey. Available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/summary.asp?mode=construct&version=0&dataset=189>

through both FTE jobs and GVA; however, given an absence of historic data for the Existing Scheme's spend profile, an accurate estimation of how this spend would have accrued in terms of FTE jobs and GVA cannot be calculated at this time.

The Applicant also made notable contributions to the local areas through establishing a successful Community Benefit Fund (CBF), charity donations and utilising local contractors (where feasible). More information on this is available in **Section 4**. Through repowering, it is the Applicant's intention to continue, and further maximise, these benefits.

3.5 Net Economic and Employment Benefits (Proposed Development)

Spend values noted in **Sections 3.5.1, 3.5.2 and 3.5.3** are best estimates based on the current onshore wind market conditions and currently available data. The values are subject to change, and the Applicant will refine numbers as the Proposed Development progresses. In addition, it should be noted that the anticipated GVA impacts for each phase of the Proposed Development have been established using 2026 as a baseline.

3.5.1 Development Phase Impacts

The main areas of development spend in Orkney and Scotland can be seen in **Table 3.1**. Any spend that accrues within the UK, or within an industry that does not have publicly available data has been scoped out of this report. 5.2% of the development phase spend will be spent within other parts of the UK, whilst 4.0% will be spent within sectors that do not have publicly available data (SIC codes 65 and 66). Combined, this accounts for a total of approximately 9.2% of the total project.

Table 3.1 - Development Phase Scottish Project Spend (Burgar Hill Energy Ltd)

Development Phase Item	SIC Code ²²	Percentage Project Spend (%)
Legal and accounting activities	69	13
Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis	71	16
Other professional; scientific and technical activities	74	57
Office administrative; office support and other business support activities	82	13
Total Spend		£863,000

As shown in **Table 3.1**, spend accrues across four main sectors. The estimated spend during the development phase within Scotland (inclusive of Orkney) is approximately £863,000. Of this spend, it is estimated approximately £223,000 (25.8%) could be spent within Orkney and approximately £640,000 (74.2%) could be spent across the rest of Scotland.

3.5.1.1 Direct, Indirect and Induced Jobs Created – Development

Employment as a result of the Proposed Development has been estimated by dividing industry specific project expenditure by average industry turnover per employee. The employment impacts are reported in terms of job years (which measure the number of years of full-time employment generated) as the contracts will be short term (i.e. 3 - 4 years for Development Phase). Induced and indirect impacts will be calculated using Type I and Type II multipliers from the Supply, Use, and Output Tables multipliers on the Scottish Government website²⁴.

²² Spend has been categorised into two-digit level Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes

Both leakage (any diversion of income from the circular flow of income and expenditure) and displacement (when new development projects cause people to be physically – i.e. jobs – or economically displaced) have been considered as part of this assessment. For local outputs (Orkney), a leakage (10%) and displacement factor (10%) have been applied to the GVA and Employment numbers. For national outputs, a leakage (5%) and displacement factor (10%) has been applied to GVA and employment numbers. It is anticipated that there is no deadweight (a loss of total economic efficiency, usually due to taxes, subsidies or price controls) or substitution (change in consumption patterns) as this is a new project.

Table 3.2 shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced jobs (as defined in **Section 3.3**) that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the development phase. It should be noted that any jobs and GVA impacts anticipated for Scotland are inclusive of those in Orkney, not in addition to.

Table 3.2 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced Job Creation during the Development Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct	Indirect	Induced
Orkney	1	0	0
Scotland (Including Orkney)	5	1	1

3.5.1.2 Direct, Indirect and Induced GVA Created - Development

Once expenditure is split into relevant industrial sectors, direct GVA was estimated by applying the relevant turnover per GVA ratio. **Table 3.3** shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced GVA that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the development phase.

Table 3.3 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced GVA during the Development Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct*	Indirect*	Induced*
Orkney	£110,000	£38,200	£28,300
Scotland (Including Orkney)	£451,000	£157,000	£116,000

*Values are rounded to three significant figures

3.5.2 Construction Phase Impacts

The main areas of construction spend in Orkney and Scotland can be seen in

Table 3.4. Any spend that accrues within the UK, or within an industry that does not have publicly available data has been scoped out of the assessment. 55.3% of the construction / repowering phase spend will be spent within other parts of the UK, most notably on turbine supply. Approximately 0.4% will be spent within sectors that do not have publicly available data (SIC code 65). Combined, this accounts for a total of approximately 55.7% of the total project.

Table 3.4 - Construction Phase Scottish Project Spend (Burgar Hill Energy Ltd)

Construction / Repowering Phase Item	SIC Code ²³	Percentage Project Spend (%)
Electricity; gas; steam and air conditioning supply	35	66
Civil Engineering	42	15

²³ Spend has been categorised into two-digit level Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes

Construction / Repowering Phase Item	SIC Code ²³	Percentage Project Spend (%)
Specialised Construction Activities	43	17
Legal and accounting activities	69	1
Renting and Leasing Activities	77	1
Total		£19,415,000

As shown in

Table 3.4, spend accrues across five main sectors. The estimated spend during the construction / repowering phase within Scotland (inclusive of Orkney) is just under £19,415,000. Of this spend, approximately £10,991,000 (56.6%) could be spent within Orkney and approximately £8,424,000 (43.4%) could be spent across the rest of Scotland.

3.5.2.1 *Direct, Indirect and Induced Jobs Created - Construction*

Employment as a result of the Proposed Development has been estimated by dividing industry specific project expenditure by average industry turnover per employee. The employment impacts are reported in terms of job years (which measure the number of years of full-time employment generated) as the contracts will be short term (i.e. 18 months for construction phase).

As discussed in **Section 3.3**, Induced and indirect impacts will be calculated using Type I and Type II multipliers from the Supply, Use, and Output Tables multipliers on the Scottish Government²⁴.

Table 3.5 shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced jobs that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the construction phase after displacement and leakage has been accounted for.

Table 3.5 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced Job Creation during the Construction Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct	Indirect	Induced
Orkney	46	21	9
Scotland (Including Orkney)	86	40	17

Based on the Orkney and Scottish spend estimates for the construction phase of the Proposed Development, it is estimated that there could be 46 and 86 direct job years generated in Orkney and Scotland (including Orkney) respectively. After considering indirect and induced impacts alongside leakage and displacement factors, there could be a total of direct, indirect and induced job years of 76 in Orkney and 143 in Scotland.

3.5.2.2 *Direct, Indirect and Induced GVA Created - Construction*

Once expenditure is split into relevant industrial sectors, direct GVA was estimated by applying the relevant turnover per GVA ratio.

Table 3.6 shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced jobs that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the construction phase. In terms of indirect and induced GVA generated by this phase of the project, the Type I (which calculate the indirect impact) and Type II (which calculate the induced impact) GVA multipliers

²⁴ Scottish Government (2025). Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables: 1998-2022. (Accessed 19/03/2026)

produced by the Scottish Government in their Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables were utilised to estimate these impacts. Similar to above, leakage and displacement factors have been applied.

Table 3.6 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced GVA Creation during the Construction Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct*	Indirect*	Induced*
Orkney	£4,120,000	£1,910,000	£959,000
Scotland (Including Orkney)	£7,740,000	£3,580,000	£1,800,100

*Values are rounded to three significant figures

Based on the Orkney and Scottish spend estimates for the construction phase of the Proposed Development, it is estimated that there could be £4.1m and £7.7m GVA generated in Orkney and Scotland (Including Orkney) respectively. After considering indirect and induced impacts alongside leakage and displacement factors, there could be a total of £6.9m GVA generated Orkney and just over £13.1m in Scotland.

3.5.3 Operational Phase Impacts

The main areas of operational spend in Orkney and Scotland can be seen in **Table 3.7**. This spend has been shown per annum for the operational phase. Any spend that accrues within the UK has been scoped out of the assessment. Approximately 48.8% of the operational phase spend will be spent within other parts of the UK, most notably due to district network operational (DNO) fees for the distribution and maintenance of the electrical network.

Table 3.7 - Operational Phase Scottish Project Spend (Per Annum) (Burgar Hill Energy Ltd)

Operational Phase Item	SIC Code	Percentage Project Spend (%)
Repair and installation of machinery and equipment	33	38
Legal and accounting activities	69	26
Architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis	71	6
Other professional; scientific and technical activities	74	1
Renting and Leasing Activities	77	21
Social work activities without accommodation	88	8
Total		£1,870,800

As shown in **Table 3.7**, spend accrues across six main sectors. The estimated spend during the operational phase within Scotland (inclusive of Orkney) is just under £1,870,800 per year. Of this spend, it is estimated that approximately £602,150 (32.2%) will be spent within Orkney and approximately £1,268,650 (67.8%) will be spent across the rest of Scotland.

3.5.3.1 Direct, Indirect and Induced Jobs Created - Operation

Applying the assessment methodology described in **Section 3.3**,

Table 3.8 shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced jobs that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the operational phase per year.

Table 3.8 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced Job Creation during the Operational Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct	Indirect	Induced
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Orkney	2	1	1
Scotland (Including Orkney)	8	2	2

**Values are rounded to three significant figures*

Based on the Orkney and Scottish spend estimates for the operational phase of the Proposed Development, it is estimated that there will be 2 and 8 direct FTE jobs generated per annum in Orkney and Scotland (Including Orkney) respectively. In total there could be 4 FTE jobs in Orkney and a further 8 FTE in Scotland.

3.5.3.2 Direct, Indirect and Induced GVA Created - Operation

Table 3.9 shows the estimated direct, indirect and induced jobs that will be created within Orkney and Scotland during the operational phase per year.

Table 3.9 - Estimated Direct, indirect and Induced GVA during the Operational Phase (GCR)

Location	Direct	Indirect	Induced
Orkney	£285,000	£81,000	£89,100
Scotland	£940,000	£267,000	£294,000

Based on the Orkney and Scottish spend estimates for the operational phase of the Proposed Development, it is estimated that there could be £455,000 and £1.5m GVA generated in Orkney and Scotland (Including Orkney) respectively after considering indirect and induced impacts alongside leakage and displacement factors.

3.5.4 Conclusions

Section 2.3 highlights Orkney has an ageing population, however, there is a higher percentage of economically active individuals relative to Scotland. Therefore, the labour market remains strong.

During the development phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate:

- £176,000 GVA and 1 job year of employment in Orkney; and
- £724,000 GVA and 7 job years of employment in Scotland (including Orkney).

During the construction phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate:

- £6.9 million GVA and 76 job years of employment in Orkney; and
- £13.1 million GVA and 143 job years of employment in Scotland (including Orkney).

During each year of the operational phase, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could generate up to:

- £455,000 GVA and 4 FTE jobs in Orkney; and
- £1.5 million GVA and 12 FTE jobs in Scotland (including Orkney).

4 Enabling Contributions

4.1 Overview

This section of the Socio-Economic Statement will discuss how both Burgar Hill Renewables and Thrive Renewables have positively contributed to the local community over Burgar Hill Wind Farm's current operational period. It will then go to discuss how the Applicant proposes to support the local community through the Proposed Development and how local communities have been engaged with. It will detail how the Applicant's contributions can:

- Meet the needs and aspirations of the local community;
- Develop a meaningful community benefit package; and
- Utilise effective governance will be established to ensure the most effective means of community benefit fund distribution.

Of the five turbines that are being repowered, all are located within the Landownership Boundary. Historically, the turbines have been operated by a number of developers but following the repower, all turbines will be owned by the Applicant.

4.2 Burgar Hill's Contributions to Date

Over the lifetime of the Existing Scheme, significant support has been provided to the local community. Up until the end of March 2026, between Burgar Hill Renewables, RWE and Thrive Renewables, approximately £329,500 has been invested in the local community. This has included:

- Funds provided directly to the Evie & Rendall Community Council (ERCC) by Burgar Hill Renewables and RWE, which has occurred on an annual basis since the respective turbine's first generation. As of March 2026, approximately £293,000 of funding has been issued to the ERCC, who have used this to support matters such as local facilities, school equipment and educational support for local residents.
- Support of over £36,600 to local charities and projects across Orkney. This has included:
 - Charities who aim to reduce fuel poverty within Orkney;
 - Charities who assist disadvantaged community members; and
 - Local projects to install energy efficient equipment in local community facilities.
- Selecting local suppliers to support construction and ongoing maintenance of the Existing Scheme, as far as possible. Of the six turbines on Site, three are serviced by local teams based in Orkney. As well as this, equipment hire and surveying is outsourced to local companies as far as possible.

4.3 Approach to Delivery

As part of the Proposed Development, the Applicant has sought community feedback at all public consultations and engaged with the local community council on how the proposed community benefit fund can best serve the local area, both in terms of how funding is distributed and what funds are put towards. For more information on public consultation and community feedback please see the **Pre-Application Consultation Report**.

Key principles for the Applicant include:

- **Local** – one party of the Applicant lives locally, and the other is committed to ensuring a clean energy future that benefits everyone. Together, the Applicant is committed that the funds be retained within the local community, with the majority likely to be invested in the communities of Evie and Rendall, with the potential

for the funds to be used to support projects and communities in the wider West Mainland and Orkney as a whole.

- **Community led collaboration** – the Applicant recognises that the people in the community have meaningful ideas about how the funds could be used to support their community. As a result, they are keen to encourage that the majority of funds be formally managed and distributed by community groups established to facilitate the best use of the funds within the community. For example, funding may be used to help facilitate community-based or local fuel poverty solutions.
- **Innovative** – Burgar Hill was one of the world's first wind energy sites, pioneering for its time. The Applicant is keen to support innovation and is open to new ideas, approaches and suggestions to encourage innovation in and from within the local community.
- **Transparent** – the Applicant aims to establish a transparent approach so that trust can be established between them, the local community and other involved parties, such as ERCC.
- **Flexible** – the Applicant aims to establish a flexible approach that responds positively to changes, as a lot can change between project inception and completion, and want the fund to be able to respond to those changing needs.

4.4 Community Benefit Fund

The Applicant has aligned the Proposed Development with the Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments²⁵.

Communities local to the Proposed Development will benefit through the Applicant's proposed Community Benefit Fund. The Applicant is proposing to provide £5,000 per MW per annum (index linked) Community Benefit for the lifetime of the Proposed Development (40 years). The Community Benefit Fund would provide long-term revenue which could be used to support community projects. Local communities would have the flexibility to choose how the money is spent and prioritise it on the things which matter most to them.

The Applicant has attended multiple Evie & Rendall Community Council meetings throughout 2025 and 2026 to discuss, among other things, the best way to distribute the community benefit fund and understand how the ERCC would like to see these mobilised. Further, the public consultation events held throughout 2025 and 2026 were used as an opportunity to garner further feedback from the wider community to understand ways that a community benefit fund, and the Proposed Development, can be best utilised to support the local community. Feedback forms are also available on the Burgar Hill Repower website (<https://burgarhillenergy.co.uk>) to capture any further feedback or queries from the local community. The results of these are outlined in the **Pre-Application Consultation Report** submitted as part of this application, however the themes noted for the community benefit fund include:

- Education and skills development;
- Support for vulnerable groups;
- Energy and cost of living;
- Community wellbeing, e.g. a community minibus and driver training;
- Health, sport and active lifestyles e.g. supporting local clubs; and
- Outdoor infrastructure and amenity enhancement e.g. walking and cycling tracks.

²⁵ Scottish Government (2018) Available at: [Scottish Government Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments](#) (Accessed 03/06/2025)

A core principle for the Applicant is proactive engagement with communities throughout the duration of a project, from initial stages through development and operation, highlighting the Applicant's commitment to a collaborative and bespoke approach towards community benefit. This principle aims to ensure that communities benefit from (particularly those in remote rural areas) and are not negatively affected by renewable energy development.

Final decisions with regards to the Community Benefit arrangement will be made by communities themselves should the Proposed Development be consented, with guidance from the Applicant where appropriate. This approach aligns with community wealth building principles whereby the Applicant are securing financial power and enabling the local people to take control of financial benefits.

4.5 Local and Shared Ownership

The Proposed Development is majority owned by a local family, contributing towards Scottish Government's target of 2GW of community and locally owned energy by 2030. The Applicant is a joint venture between this family and Thrive Renewables plc, a company with a long history of facilitating community ownership of clean energy projects over the last 20 years.

The Applicant is committed to offering the local community a shared ownership stake of up to 10% investment in the Proposed Development. Thrive Renewables are able to offer loan finance to the local community where required to maximise equitable participation within the local area.

4.6 Supporting Skills and Workforce Development

The Applicant will prioritise local bids when evaluating tender responses to maximise the opportunity that construction work, or the team servicing the turbines during the Operational period will be based on Orkney. As discussed in **Section 2.3.2**, the higher rate of economically active population suggests a higher potential to recruit local workers and the Applicant will maximise local opportunities. However, specialist roles may require workers from outwith Orkney.

Due to the nature of the skills required for some elements the Proposed Development, it may be likely that some national scale contractors (Scottish-based contractors) may be appointed; however, when on Site, national contractors will utilise local suppliers when possible, including local hotels, restaurants and other services when appropriate. The Applicant will encourage the use of the local supply chain where possible.

4.7 Protecting and Enhancing the Natural and Built Environment

The Applicant recognises that tackling the climate crisis also offers an opportunity to address the biodiversity crisis. The 2019 State of Nature Scotland report indicated that 49% of Scottish species have decreased in abundance and 11% of species are threatened (Scottish Government, 2023)²⁶. Renewable energy developments can support biodiversity through thoughtful design, mitigation, and enhancements. The Applicant operates with a sustainable and ethical approach that delivers value to the business while also helping to tackle global challenges such as environmental degradation.

Burgar Hill Energy Limited have engaged specialist ecological consultants to support the Proposed Development. The ecologists have assessed the design proposals, identified potential ecological risks, and developed biodiversity enhancement strategies to optimise positive outcomes. The strategies for the Proposed Development are outlined in **Appendix 8.3 - Outline Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (OBEMP)**. The OBEMP creates positive biodiversity impacts through restoring (modified peatlands) and enhancing the types of habitats from low-value habitats to higher-value habitats (such as hedgerows, wildflower rich grasslands). The proposed habitat compensation and enhancements have been undertaken to significantly enhance and incorporate within the

²⁶ Scottish Government (2023). [Tackling the nature emergency: Consultation on Scotland's Strategic Framework for Biodiversity](#) (Accessed 28/04/2026)

design the long-term benefits for biodiversity locally and within connected nature networks linking to the wider ecological systems. The measures detailed within the OBEMP aim to achieve compensatory mitigation as per the EIA mitigation hierarchy and significant biodiversity enhancement and conservation management measures at the site, in line with policy obligations and objectives outlined in National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Policy 3.

The outline biodiversity enhancement plan will be refined and developed into a final Biodiversity & Enhancement Management Plan (BEMP) post-consent. A Steering Group will oversee and monitor the implementation of the agreed and finalised BEMP. The Steering Group should include representatives from the Orkney Islands Council, NatureScot, RSPB and the Landowner. Monitoring is to be undertaken by a competent ecologist(s) and all monitoring and enhancement will be overseen by the Steering Group.

5 Conclusions

This Socio-Economic Statement has shown that the Existing Scheme has provided a range of positive opportunities for the local and national economy and the local community, through the direct project spend, establishing a successful community benefit fund, charity donations and utilising local contractors where feasible.

It has also shown that through repowering, the Proposed Development will continue to maximise on its existing success by creating further positive opportunities for the local and national economy, through direct employment and the increase in local / national GVA. Indirect and induced employment opportunities and GVA benefits will be experienced through the supply chain, to maximise the Proposed Development's potential net economic benefits. During the development phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate:

- £176,000 GVA and 1 job year of employment in Orkney; and
- £724,000 GVA and 7 job years of employment in Scotland (including Orkney).

During the construction phase, it is estimated that the Proposed Development could generate:

- £6.9 million GVA and 76 job years of employment in Orkney; and
- £13.1 million GVA and 143 job years of employment in Scotland (including Orkney).

During each year of the operational phase, it was estimated that the Proposed Development could generate up to:

- £455,000 GVA and 4 FTE jobs in Orkney; and
- £1.5 million GVA and 12 FTE jobs in Scotland (including Orkney).

Further contributions will be made by establishing conditions for success through by continuing to support the local community councils through the community benefit fund, continuing to use local contractors where feasible, and potential shared ownership opportunities. The Applicant represents a joint venture between a local landowner (Burgar Hill Renewables Ltd) and Thrive Renewables, a UK B Corp which is verified to meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. Both companies are committed to ensuring the benefits are delivered to the local community for the operational life of the Proposed Development.

Registered Office

Green Cat Renewables
Stobo House
Roslin
Midlothian
EH25 9RE

+44 (0) 131 541 0060

info@greencatrenewables.co.uk
www.greencatrenewables.co.uk